

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 PANAMA 07096 01 OF 02 302134Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-15 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DHA-05 /080 W
-----121925 302146Z /72

P R 302047Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3937
INFO PANCANAL
USCINCSO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PANAMA 7096

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: SOPN, PBOR, PN
SUBJECT: PANAMANIAN TELEVISION COMMENTATOR ANALYZES SENATE
HEARINGS ON THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE COMMENTARY SPOKEN
OVER PANAMA'S CHANNEL 2 TV ON THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER
29 BY MARIO VELASQUEZ PANAMA'S PREMIER COMMENTATOR AND CONFIDANT
OF GENERAL TORRIJOS.

2. DURING THE CURRENT WEEK, VERY SERIOUS PRONOUNCEMENTS
HAVE BEEN MADE DURING THE TREATY HEARINGS IN THE SENATE
FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE. SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS
VANCE, DEFENSE SECRETARY HAROLD BROWN, CHAIRMAN OF THE
JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF GEN. GEORGE BROWN AND NEGOTIATOR SOL
LINOWITZ HAVE SAID DURING THE HEARINGS THAT THE TREATY
ON THE PERMANENT NEUTRALITY AND OPERATION OF THE CANAL GRANTS
THE UNITED STATES THE RIGHT OF UNILATERAL INTERVENTION
IN OUR COUNTRY AFTER THE YEAR 2,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF
GUARANTEEING NEUTRALITY AND THE OPERATION OF THE WATERWAY.

3. THOSE RANKING U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE GONE SO FAR AS TO
SAY THAT THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT COMMITTED ITSELF THAT
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PAGE 02 PANAMA 07096 01 OF 02 302134Z

THERE WOULD BE NO FURTHER PUBLIC STATEMENTS SUCH AS THOSE
MADE BY DR. ROMULO ESCOBAR IN THE SENSE THAT PANAMA HAS
NOT GRANTED ANY RIGHT OF INTERVENTION TO THE UNITED
STATES. FURTHERMORE, NEGOTIATOR LINOWITZ ANSWERED ONE
SENATOR'S QUESTION BY NOTING THAT HE WOULD BE WILLING TO
ASK THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT TO ISSUE A WRITTEN
DECLARATION HEREIN THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT STATES THAT

IT AGREES WITH THE AMERICAN INTERPRETATION OF THE SCOPE
OF THE NEUTRALITY TREATY.

4. I AM ONE OF THOSE WHO THINK THAT A CAREFUL READING
OF THE NEUTRALITY TREATY DOES NOT NECESSARILY LEAD TO THE
CONCLUSION THAT PANAMA HAS GRANTED THE UNITED STATES
THE RIGHT TO INTERVENE. I ADMIT THAT I AM NOT A LAWYER
AND PERHAPS FOR THAT REASON LEGAL SUBTLETIES OR
INTERPRETATIONS ESCAPE ME WHICH WOULD SEEM EVIDENT TO A LAWYER.
HOWEVER, I INSIST THAT I DO NOT SEE THE RIGHT OF INTERVENTION
IN THE BLACK-AND-WHITE TERMS THAT THE RANKING U.S.
OFFICIALS WHO HAVE ADDRESSED THE SENATE HEARINGS WANT
TO PORTRAY. HOWEVER, THE FACT THAT THE NEUTRALITY TREATY,
IN MY JUDGMENT AND IN THE JUDGMENT OF MANY OTHER
PEOPLE, DOES NOT INCLUDE THE U.S. RIGHT OF INTERVENTION
DOES NOT LESSE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE REMARKS AND DECLAR-
ATIONS MADE BY THE SECRETARIES OF STATE AND DEFENSE,
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEF, OF STAFF AND
NEGOTIATOR LINOWITZ. THESE DECLARATIONS, WHICH WILL GO
DOWN IN SENATE RECORDS, WILL SET PRECEDENTS FOR THE FUTURE
INTERPRETATION OF THE TREATY. THIS DENOTES THEIR SPECIAL
IMPORTANCE NOT ONLY NOW, BUT LATER.

5. I CAN WELL UNDERSTAND THAT MANY OF THESE THINGS ARE
STATED IN THE SENATE AND IN THE PRESS TO REDUCE OPPOSITION
TO THE TREATIES IN THE UNITED STATES. THEY ARE PART OF THE
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PAGE 03 PANAMA 07096 01 OF 02 302134Z

STRATEGY TO OBTAIN THE APPROVAL OF THE AMERICAN SENATE
AND PUBLIC OPINION. I BELIEVE THAT MANY OF THE THINGS
THAT HAVE BEEN SAID AND WILL BE SAID IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS,
WEEKS OR MONTHS IN THE UNITED STATES CAN BE OVERLOOKED
IF THEY DO NOT TOUCH ON BASIC ISSUES. HOWEVER, ANYTHING
THAT REFERES TO CANAL NEUTRALITY AND TO THE DANGERS OF U.S.
INTERVENTION IN PANAMA IS A BASIC ELEMENT THAT MUST
BE CLARIFIED FOR THE AMERICAN AND PANAMANIAN PEOPLES
BECAUSE IT IS A VERY SENSITIVE ISSUE WHICH, AS FAR AS
PANAMA IS CONCERNED, MAY AFFECT THE DESTINY OF OUR
HOMELAND.

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 07096 02 OF 02 302138Z

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 PANAMA 7096

6. AT THE SAME TIME, WHAT IS TAKING PLACE DURING THE HEARINGS OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE EVIDENCES THE NUMBER OF DIFFICULTIES THAT ARE INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATING WITH THE UNITED STATES. IN CRUDE TERMS, SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE, DEFENSE SECRETARY HAROLD BROWN, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF GENERAL BROWN, NEGOTIATOR LINOWITZ AND SEVERAL SENATORS ARE SPEAKING OF THE RIGHT OF UNILATERAL INTERVENTION IN PANAMA ON A PERMANENT BASIS. ACCORDING TO THEM, THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THAT RIGHT OR SPECIFICATIONS ON HOW TO EXERCISE IT. ALL THAT PREVAILS IS THE AMERICAN WILL OR INTEREST, EVEN TO ACT AGAINST PANAMANIANS IF IT IS DETERMINED THAT THE NEUTRALITY AND OPERATION OF THE CANAL ARE THREATENED.

7. THIS IS BRAZEN, BIG POWER LANGUAGE WHICH REMINDS ONE OF THE WORST TIMES OF THE BRUTAL IMPERIALIST BIG STICK POLICY. THOSE GENTLEMEN WHO ARE PART OF THE POWER STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED STATES, A COUNTRY THAT HAS SET ITSELF UP AS WORLD POLICEMAN AND CLAIMS TO HAVE THE TOTALITY OF DEMOCRATIC VIRTUES AND DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, DO NOT HAVE ANY SHAME IN SPEAKING OF MILITARY INTERVENTION AGAINST AND TO THE DETRIMENT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 PANAMA 07096 02 OF 02 302138Z

A SMALL NATIONA WHICH HAS SUFFOCATED UNDER THE YOKE WHICH THAT SAME POWER STRUCTURE IMPOSED ON IT 74 YEARS AGO.

8. IT WOULD SEEM AS IF THE ONLY LESSON THAT AMERICAN STATESMEN CAN UNDERSTAND IS THAT WHICH THE PEOPLE OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA TAUGHT THEM WITH HEROISM WHEN THEY EXPelled THE LAST AMERICAN SOLDIER, FOLLOWED BY THEIR AMBASSADORS WHO ESCAPED IN AWE FROM THE EMBASSIES' ROOFTOPS, PRACTICALLY HANGING FROM THE HELICOPTERS TO

AVOID THE JUSTICE-THIRSTY IRE OF THOSE WHO HAD BEEN
VICTIMIZED FOR YEARS WITH A BRUTAL MILITARY INTERVENTION
IN WHOSE NAME A MONSTROUS GENOCIDE WAS CARRIED OUT
AGAINST THE DESPERATE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE.

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Message Attributes

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TAGS: SOPN, PBOR, PN, PQ
To: STATE
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